



Dear Citizen:

Thank you for your interest in starting a ***Neighborhood Watch*** in your area. If you ultimately agree to the conditions and instructions provided in this packet, Bernalillo County **Neighborhood Coordination (505) 468-1279** will assist you in the process.

A *Neighborhood Watch*, in conjunction with law enforcement will help you and your neighbors organize to reduce and hopefully eliminate crime. *Neighborhood Watch* programs are organized on a ***block-by-block*** basis. If you chose to proceed with the organization of a *Neighborhood Watch*, and if you agree to host a meeting, a representative from the Bernalillo County Sheriff's Department will assist you with the meeting and presentation. During the meeting, we will present personal safety information and ask that you and your neighbors select a **Block Captain**. This does not necessarily have to be the same person who hosts the first meeting. The designated Block Captain will serve as a contact person for the Sheriff's Department and for the other residents of the block.

Please use the attached form to prepare a list of names, addresses, and telephone numbers of each member of the block prior to the first meeting. (Note: The first step of organization and approval of a ***Neighborhood Watch*** is the completion of the list and the returning of the list to the Neighborhood Program Coordinator.) Once the Neighborhood Program Coordinator receives the completed list, he/she will contact you to schedule the date and time of the meeting. The Neighborhood Program Coordinator will also contact the Bernalillo County Sheriff's Department.

We look forward to hearing from you soon and if you have any questions, please feel free to contact Neighborhood Coordination at (505) 468-1279. Thank you again for your involvement and support.

Sincerely,

Bernadette Miera

Neighborhood Program Coordinator



## Starting a Neighborhood Watch

The following steps show how to start a *Neighborhood Watch* in your neighborhood. For additional information, see Block Captain Duties below.

1. You or a neighbor decides to host an initial *Neighborhood Watch* meeting.
2. Whoever is going to host the meeting calls the Public Information Department's Neighborhood Program Coordinator at (505)468-1279 to provide their name, address and phone number. After making the call, the Neighborhood Program Coordinator will send a "starter packet" that will include, among other items, a form to collect information from your neighbors.
3. The host or designee goes up and down the block contacting the neighbors and recording their name, address and phone number on the form. (Note: At least 50% of the homes on the block must be represented at the *Neighborhood Watch* meeting to qualify for sign placement.)
4. The host then sends the completed list back to the Neighborhood Program Coordinator in the self-addressed envelope provided in the starter packet.
5. After the Neighborhood Program Coordinator receives the list from the interested party, a he or she will contact the host to set up a date and time for the Neighborhood Watch meeting.
6. The Neighborhood Program Coordinator will then mail out invitations to each person whose name appears on the list. Fliers will also be sent to the host to be given out to the neighbors as a "last minute" reminder.
7. At the meeting, the host provides chairs and simple refreshments.
8. The Sheriff's Department Deputy will assist with conducting the meeting and provide Community Resource Information for all of the attendants.
9. The Block Captain is responsible for contacting new neighbors and for providing updated information to the Neighborhood Program Coordinator (Block Captain replacement, etc).
10. The block is now organized and may collectively purchase Neighborhoods Organized Against Crime (NOAC) street signs. The signs may be ordered (by the Block Captain only) through the Neighborhood Program Coordinator. The first sign is paid for by Bernalillo County. Residents are responsible for the purchase of any subsequent signage. The Block Captain may also join the Albuquerque Block Captains Association (ABCA) by contacting Steve Sink (505)924-3600 or emailing him at [ssink@cabq.gov](mailto:ssink@cabq.gov).

**Neighborhood Program Coordinator (505)468-1279**

## Block Captain Duties

The key person in any **Neighborhood Watch** group is the Block Captain. This person is an integral component in keeping the block actively involved in crime prevention efforts as well as the important process of information exchange between neighbors. Many **Neighborhood Watch** groups flourish, but some dwindle while others disappear totally. How successful they are depends on the Block Captain and the support he or she receives from neighbors.

The following is a list of recommended activities for you as a Block Captain. It is not meant to be all-inclusive, because many Block Captains are creative in their approach. (Note: The **Albuquerque Block Captains Association** (ABCA) is an excellent source of ideas. Any Block Captain is eligible to join.) Contact Steve Sink at (505)924-3600 or by email at [ssink@cabq.gov](mailto:ssink@cabq.gov).

1. Periodically monitor the membership of your group. Contact new residents to get them involved and to obtain their support and participation. Update your membership list as needed. Contact the Neighborhood Program Coordinator if you have changes to the roster. If you stop serving as a Block Captain and/or if someone takes over, contact our office.
2. Develop a neighborhood communication system to distribute vital information to neighbors pertaining to criminal activity and other concerns that develop in the area. This can be a periodic newsletter, telephone tree, and/or a one-page notice that can be quickly distributed.
3. You are encouraged to arrange for your group to meet socially at least twice per year to exchange information and renew relationships as well as to get acquainted with new neighbors. People who communicate regularly will care more about each other and be more willing to keep an eye out for suspicious behavior. The annual National Night Out (NNO) celebration is one example that will bring your neighbors together. (Membership is required; visit <http://www.nationalnightout.org/natw/about.html> to learn more.)
4. A follow up *Neighborhood Watch* program should be conducted every few years or sooner if specific problems are occurring in your neighborhood. This should also be the case if you have several new neighbors. Call the Neighborhood Program Coordinator to arrange for a presentation.
5. Encourage neighbors to advise you concerning criminal activity. It is the victim's responsibility to contact the law enforcement. However, you can keep a record of break-ins, vandalism, graffiti, and/or any activity that becomes a concern for you and your neighbors. Provide this type of information to neighbors at your next block meeting.
6. Your position as a Block Captain does not give you any law enforcement authority. You are simply the person who facilitates the unity of the group, distributes information, and coordinates activities. The job you are doing is important and appreciated by the Bernalillo County Sheriff's Department, but it carries no authority.
7. Remember: Our recommendation to all citizens who see a crime in progress or notice suspicious activity is to observe and report from a place of safety. We strongly suggest that you not confront an offender unless you are in immediate danger. This applies to you and your neighbors. We do not want anyone to get hurt or injured trying to apprehend an offender or interfering with an incident other than to report the activity to the police. If you or your neighbors witness a crime in progress or observe suspicious behavior, call 911 (emergency) or 798-7000 (non-emergency).

**Neighborhood Program Coordinator (505)468-1279**



MEETING HOST: \_\_\_\_\_

MEETING DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

INCLUDE HOST NAME(S) ADDRESS ON LIST BELOW.

**MEETING ATTENDEES:**

Verify/correct/add information  
below as necessary. (Please  
include home and work numbers.)

**If Possible, please list addresses below in numerical order by block. Please print clearly thank you!**

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Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Home PH \_\_\_\_\_  
Work PH \_\_\_\_\_

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